

CLAIMS

THE INVENTION CLAIMED IS:

- 5 1. A method for facilitating the exchange of information between vendors and seekers, the method comprising the steps of:

entering vendors' item records as listings in an electronically searchable data structure;

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searching said data structure on the basis of seeker queries generated by seekers;

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7. A method according to claim 2, including the step of aiding the vendors to enter assemblies of items by providing a software module configured to recognize an item which is an assembly of parts and to generate a list of the component parts for entry into the data structure.

8. A network business application including:

an Internet accessible graphical user interface in communication with an electronically searchable listing catalogue of items offered for sale by vendors;

a software module configured to search the listing catalogue in respect of seeker search queries for items;

15 a search results software module configured to store seeker and vendor contact details for each instance of a search query matching a listing of the listing catalogue.

9. A network business application according to claim 8, including an electronically searchable item catalogue containing a list of items permitted to be listed in the listing catalogue.

10. A network business application according to claim 9, programmed to only enter a vendor listing into the listing catalogue if a corresponding listing first appears in the item catalogue.

11. A network business application according to claim 8 further including a filtering software module configured to allow a vendor to specify that the vendor's listings are not to be viewed by seekers specified by the vendor.

12. A network business application according to claim 10 programmed to only search the listing catalogue in respect of seeker search queries that are for items appearing in the item catalogue.

13. A network business application according to claim 12 including a dismantler software module configured to generate a listing of item identifiers being sub-parts of an assembly item in response to submission of the assembly item's identifier.

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14. A network business application according to claim 13 including a software module configured to aid vendors in creating item listings for submission by presenting them with a series of options to select between.

15. A network business application according to claim 14 including a software module configured to aid vendors in creating item listings for submission by presenting them with a series of options to select between.